

WELLINGTON/DOOLEY COURT

A Practical Alternative to the American Dream

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by

Mary Troutman
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Introduction

The cottages in Dooley Court were built in the Utah boom years between 1894 and 1904. Originally known as Wellington Court¹, these pleasant worker's cottages were homes to renters for over forty-five years. Developed by James M. Harvey, a local real estate investor and "capitalist,"² Dooley court is conveniently located about halfway between the University of Utah and the central business district of Salt Lake City. Four elegant two-story homes and eighteen worker's cottages are situated on a quiet cull-de-sac that runs north from 200 South at 825 East. Dooley Court fulfilled the American dream of living in a single family residence for numerous families, offering this popular option of accommodation to families who chose to rent rather than buy their homes.

After completing the first phase of construction in 1894, James and Martha Harvey resided at #9 Wellington Court for four years. James sponsored rental advertisements in the Salt Lake Tribune for these new cottages consistently in both 1895 and 1897.

¹According to city directories, the cull-de-sac was renamed in 1917.

²Harvey was born in Cattaraugus County, New York, and lived in Chicago prior to moving to Salt Lake City in 1871. His wife Martha was a long time resident of Moroni. Harvey worked as the city watermaster in 1891, and is listed as a "Capitalist" in 1896 city directories.

They moved to Los Angeles in 1898, but returned to Salt Lake City in 1900, and built another cottage development very similar to Wellington Court³. Both James and Martha lived in this development until their deaths in the 1920's⁴.

Early Development

As many historians have recorded, Utah suffered an economic depression in 1893⁵; many building activities were put on hold that year. Building in the downtown area was much increased in 1894, but overall expenditures in Salt Lake City only increased by 5% from 1893 to 1894. Building expenditures in the valley did not increase significantly until 1897. James Harvey purchased the Wellington Court property in November of 1893 and put in the road and sidewalk soon afterward. He was a shrewd investor to undertake

³Harvey was involved with four other building projects similar to Wellington Court in Salt Lake City: Harvey's Cottage Row (circa 1885), Willard Court (circa 1890), Devon Court (circa 1900), and Clift Place (circa 1900). Each of these was located near West Temple, in the area between 300 South and 600 South. With the exception of Harvey's Cottage Row, which contained eight single-story frame houses along 500 South, all of these followed the Wellington Court layout of small inner courts that led away from a main street and into the center of each block. Many of the single-story brick cottages had the same footprint as the Wellington Court homes. It is not known whether these were utilized for rental income when they were first built. All four were occupied by renters from 1925 until the 1940's, when several of the Willard, Devon, and Clift units came under owner occupation. None of these developments exist today..

⁴Deseret News, 2 February 1920. Salt Lake Tribune, 25 February 1926.

⁵An account of this is given in Charles Anderson's 1945 study of the growth patterns of Salt Lake City.

a project such as Wellington Court in the midst of uncertain local economic conditions. This may explain why James Harvey's scheme deviated from the standard development sequence of American subdivisions, in which construction occurs from the outside in, with larger, more expensive and elaborate homes on the most visible lots completed first.⁶ The homes on Wellington Court did not follow this progression. The first home to be completed was built in the center of the court; three months later, the two smallest homes in the development were constructed along the west side of the cull-de-sac. Ten more cottages⁷ were completed that year, including the seven-room cottage where the Harvey family lived. All of these cottages faced each other along the center of the cull-de-sac. Builders hired by James Harvey for this period of construction included Cogle & Lester and J. Williams⁸.

The next major period of construction at Wellington Court occurred in 1898, when an architect named Allison⁹ designed seven homes for James Harvey. Four two-story homes along 200 South, an asymmetrical cottage at the head of the cull-de-sac, and two

⁶Darlington Place and the Perkins Addition are local examples of residential developments that followed this pattern.

⁷These cottages ranged in size from three to five rooms each.

⁸Neither Cogle & Lester nor J. Williams are listed in city directories of this period. Sherwin Lester, a general contractor who may have been affiliated with Cogle & Lester, appears from 1905-1909.

⁹Little is known about Allison; his first name is not given on the building permits for this construction period, and his name is not found on other building permits of the time. He is not listed in city directories from 1884 to 1900.

additional cottages were completed that year. Although the 1897 building permits indicate that James Harvey was granted building rights for a total of six two-story homes, it is likely that this was initially recorded incorrectly. The estimated cost of construction for the two story homes on 200 South is recorded as \$2500 each. An additional entry is given for two two-story homes to be constructed at #7 and #8 Wellington Court, at an estimated cost of only \$1500 each, the same price listed for other single story brick cottages of comparable size for that year. Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps show that these homes were single story dwellings in 1911. No additional building permits for construction on these two sites are listed prior to 1911, and streetscape photos taken by Shipler Commercial Photography in 1912 suggest that no more than four two-story homes were present in the development.

Early Ownership

Soon after their completion in the fall of 1894, James Harvey sold some of the cottages to Frank Wilson, a prominent mining investor and owner of the distinguished Wilson Hotel and Cafe¹⁰, for \$8000. Wilson had discovered two profitable gold mines in 1892¹¹; he sold these claims in 1896, "taking out a small fortune from the

¹⁰According to Utah Since Statehood, the Wilson Hotel was modern and fashionable, consisting of 156 rooms and a popular cafe that was "patronized by the best people in the city and by many tourists." One third of the rooms contained private baths.

¹¹Both mines were located in Nevada: the April Fool Mine and the Delamar Mine.

mines." James Harvey sold the remainder of the property to Wilson in 1898 for \$16,000, after construction was completed on the homes designed by Allison. Wilson never resided at Wellington Court; W.J. Halloran, who worked in real estate loans and was associated with Wilson at the Johnny Gold M. & M. Mining Company, was in charge of securing tenants, and may have also coordinated bookkeeping and maintenance¹². This arrangement continued until 1903, when the property was sold to Wilson's recently wed mining partner, William J. Dooley¹³.

Dooley and his bride, Georgia, lived in Stateline until shortly before the birth of their first daughter in 1904. When they initially moved to Wellington Court, they resided in the same house in which Harvey had lived, the largest and most decorative of the single-story cottages. They built two more cottages that year, adhering to the same plan and materials as the earlier cottages. By 1910, their family had grown to six and they resided in one of the grand two story homes on 200 South. After William died in 1928, Georgia continued to live in this home until she moved to California in the early 1940's¹⁴. The three Dooley sons (ages 18-21) formed the Dooley Brothers' Investment Company in 1928 and

¹²Halloran did not live in Wellington Court.

¹³Dooley and Wilson were partners for many years. In addition to their Nevada endeavors, they were partners in Salt Lake City's Johnny Gold M. & M. Mining Company. In 1911, Dooley became the Secretary/Treasurer of the American China Clay Company and the Vice President of Warranty Real Estate Investment Company.

¹⁴Georgia Dooley became one of the first women admitted to the bar in California and Nevada.

maintained the cottages in Dooley Court until they were sold to individual owners circa 1940.

Like many investors of the time, the Dooley Brothers became victims of strained economics in the early depression years; turnover and vacancy rates were extremely high. Thirteen of the twenty units were vacant in 1928; twelve were vacant in 1933. The Dooley brothers offered "free moving service, low rent, 3-4-5 rooms, in pretty Dooley Court" during this period, but they were not able to thwart their financial woes. Salt Lake City title abstracts indicate that a tax lien was placed on the property for the years of 1926, 1927, 1930, 1931, and 1932. In 1933, the Dooley Brothers lost the property in a tax sale to Josephine Hill¹⁵. She returned the property to John E. Dooley in 1935.

Characteristics of Occupants

An evaluation of the 1910 and 1920 census data sheds light on socioeconomic differences between the occupants of the two-story homes that face 200 South and the single story cottages of the inner court. In addition to the Dooley family, 1910 occupants of the large homes included the widow of a real estate loan officer and her five children, and a produce company salesman and his family of four, who boarded a student lodger. Residents of these

¹⁵Ms. Hill may have been related to Georgia Dooley's mother, Bridget Hill.

homes in 1920 included a smelter foreman, his wife, and three children; and an older lawyer who lived in the home with his wife and three grown children. Occupants of the smaller cottages during this period were primarily low-to-middle class workers. Railroad workers, salesmen, and clerks were the most commonly found occupations among residents in both 1910 and 1920. Two widows in 1910 and three in 1920 resided with their families in Wellington Court. In 1910, the average family size among occupants of the large homes was five, while the average in the cottages was three. In 1920, these figures were five and four, respectively. Rental advertisements in the Salt Lake Tribune give more insight into this issue. In 1898, the eight-room grand homes rented for \$30 per month, while the five-room smaller cottages rented for \$15.

Early tenants worked in a variety of jobs in Salt Lake City. Although a few of them were widows and retirees, most residents were traditional families¹⁶. Many of them were recent arrivals in the valley, attracted to Salt Lake City in search of work. These early tenants were highly migratory; out of eighteen families who resided in Wellington Court in 1910, only three purchased homes in Salt Lake City by 1920. Four families rented elsewhere in the city, and nine left the state. The only family that kept their same residence during these years was W.B. Todd, an executive with Warm Springs Baths, and his wife Jessie, who moved into one of the

¹⁶Appendix (??) contains a table that outlines the family demographic status of Wellington Court residents.

grander homes on Second South street circa 1907¹⁷. After W.B.'s death in the late 1920's, Jessie continued to reside in the home until moving into a nearby apartment in 1940, where she lived until her death in 1964. None of the other Wellington Court tenants in the years 1905-1939 stayed in these cottages more than five years.

Census records of 1910 and 1920 indicate that all residents of Dooley Court were white. Most were born in the United States, many of them first generation children of immigrants from Canada, Sweden, Holland, England, Scotland, and Ireland. The first ethnic sounding names belong to Mrs. Bessie Munoz and Rocco Riccardi, who appear in the 1935 city directory. Other ethnic names do not appear until 1955, when Otto and Guenter Stoss purchased #155¹⁸. By the 1960's, however, many occupants possessed ethnic sounding names, including Hurst, Jensckewski, Bernsteil, Barraco, Salam, Varga, and Togeil.

After the homes became privately owned beginning in 1939¹⁹, the residents became much less mobile. These first owners generally

¹⁷W.B. resided at the YMCA in 1906; he and Jesse may have moved into this house as a result of marriage.

¹⁸Otto Stoss continues to reside in this home.

¹⁹A discrepancy arises about the early status of ownership for many of the homes. City directories indicate that nine units were owner occupied in 1939, eighteen by 1950. Title abstracts, however, indicate that only eleven were owned by 1950. Since many of these owners are listed in city directories as owners before they appear in title abstracts, it is likely that an informal agreement had been made for the purchase of homes before these transactions were officially recorded in county records. City directory statistics were used in the calculation of this data.

occupied their homes for several years²⁰. Jesse T. Kemp was by far the longest resident of these, residing in #128 from 1940-1965. Most of the tenants in the late 1930's and early 1940's did not become homeowners in Dooley Court. Of the eighteen families who rented there in 1935, only one became an owner by 1940. Of the 1940 tenants, three became owners by 1950. Almost all of the first generation home owners in Dooley Court moved into the neighborhood as they became owners.

It is unclear how the individual purchase of these homes was financed. Although the Federal Housing ~~Association~~ ^{ADMINISTRATION} (FHA) was primarily involved with guaranteeing mortgages for new homes, it is possible that they played a role in the ability of families to purchase Dooley Court homes in the early 1940's. With their solid masonry construction, built-in plumbing systems, and small size, the cottages would have fallen within the guidelines of the FHA. Financing may also have included seller contracts, with the Dooley family sponsoring installment payments for buyers.

Physical Features

The homes that line Wellington/Dooley Court are built on sandstone foundations, with hipped roofs and hipped front bays. In contrast to the elegant homes that face 200 South, these smaller

²⁰The average length of stay among these first owners was 8.5 years. Rental tenants continued to be highly mobile; the only long-term tenant of this period was Mrs. Birdie M. Lundquist, who resided in #150 from 1946-1955.

cottages are characterized by humble simplicity, which continues to characterize the neighborhood today. Aside from the bay window which faces south on #9 (where the Harvey & Dooley families lived), original decorative elements on the cottages were minor. Segmented arched windows, framed by gently notched sashes, and transoms above the front doors provide very slight distinctiveness. The porches were originally very plain, with three small square supporting posts adorned with modest corner boards present along the front. The Shipler photographs of 1912 reveal that the distinctive multi-paned front windows that are present on many of the homes today are not original; these may have been added circa 1920²¹. Not surprisingly, the interior of these humble cottages was also very simple, especially in their earliest years. High ceilings characterize the interior; the only detailing appears to be an unpretentious cornice molding mounted above the window openings in two front rooms²².

Although similar materials were used in the four two-story brick Victorian eclectic residences that face 200 South, these homes are notably more intricate and spacious than the worker's cottages of the inner court. These eight room homes contain two decorative dogtooth courses of brick which run along the front and

²¹Interior French doors found in five foot openings between front rooms match these front windows and were probably added at the same time. It is plausible that the Dooley family made these improvements in an effort to bring more splendor to these modest cottages and remain competitive with newer homes of the 1920's.

²²This detail element has been preserved in #132, which is presently under rehabilitation.

sides near the tops of segmented arch windows. Historic photos show the original frame porches of these homes to have been fairly decorative, with turned columns, square balustrades, and intricate molding articulating the porch frieze.

The Wellington Court homes were considered very modern for their time, with water closets, bathrooms, pantries, and clothes closets²³. A photograph which was taken in 1912 by Shipler Commercial Photography does not show street lighting, and power lines are not visible. Electricity may have been an original amenity in Wellington Court due to its proximity to the electric trolley line along 200 South; however, the awkward placement of electrical outlets in the floor and the presence of a window in the closet suggest that electricity was added after construction. The larger homes on 200 South were equipped with central heat, while most of the smaller cottages contained piping for three coal or wood stoves. Natural Gas lines were installed in 1952.

Accommodation for automobiles was not part of the original Wellington Court plan. Though most residents probably commuted on the trolley that ran along 200 South from State Street to 10th East, several wooden horse-tie posts lined the eastern edge of the street in the early years. The cull-de-sac in Wellington Court, merely 19 feet wide, was lined with Lombardy Poplar trees for many years. These were removed circa 1950, presumably to make the

²³Salt Lake Tribune, 20 February 1895:8, 1 January 1898:8.

street wide enough to accommodate parking²⁴. The homes are close together; separation between the houses ranges from six to sixteen feet. Several frame garages have been added to many of the tiny lots since 1969, in between and to the rear of the cottages.

Most of the homes in the inner court originally contained less than 1200 square feet. Two of the homes were about 550 square feet, and the largest was almost 1500 square feet. The grand homes on 200 South contained approximately 1900 square feet. Many of the cottages have been enlarged since 1969. At least three have additions to the rear, eight have extended into basements which were dug out under their homes, and one has three dormers for expansion into the attic. Five have expanded to the front, closing in all or part of the front porches. Only three cottages have maintained their original brick exterior facade; of the remaining cottages, one has been encased in aluminum siding, one has been covered partially with frame siding, and thirteen have been coated with stucco. Of the four two-story homes, one was demolished in 1992 after heavy snow caused roof failure; the remaining three all contain rear additions. One of the front porches has been enclosed.

Conclusion: Historical Significance

Wellington/Dooley Court has been altered over the years, but

²⁴Another factor might have been the fact that Lombardy Poplars generally have a life span of under 60 years.

in spite of these alterations, the court retains its basic integrity in scale and character. It is important because it embodied many aspects of the American suburban ideal for lower middle class workers in Salt Lake City, offering a practical housing alternative to families who wanted to live in single family residences but lacked the financial resources or stability needed to purchase their own homes. Many of the renters who lived in the neighborhood were undoubtedly attracted by the freedom from responsibilities of home ownership. The characteristic high turnover in tenants suggests that this area was occupied by migratory residents who sought living quarters that provided for easy relocation²⁵. Whatever the reason, it is clear that the family-oriented lifestyle²⁶ of Dooley Court was highly desirable to many families in the early years of its existence, providing pleasant cottages with modern amenities to residents who might have otherwise lived in urban apartments without lawns, porches, or tree-lined play areas for their children.

²⁵Roger Roper discusses this phenomena on page nine of his unpublished essay, "Homeowners and Renters: An Examination of Suburban and Apartment Residents in Salt Lake During the Early Twentieth Century." He gives insight into the migratory nature of renters: "...over 43 per cent of 1910 renters came from elsewhere, and about the same percent moved away after leaving their sampled apartment."

²⁶Shipler photographs of the neighborhood in 1912 are dominated by children of all ages. Sixty percent of the residents in 1910 were children under 14; in 1920, this increased to seventy-eight percent. With the exception of a handful of widows, most of the homes were occupied by married couples. See appendix I for more specific data on these figures.

Appendix I

Family Demographic Status

	1910	1920
Percent of Families with Children Under 18	60	78
Percent of Children under 14	29	36
Percent of Children under 10	23	25
Percent of Children under 6	11	12
Average Number of Occupants per Household	2.9	3.9

APPENDIX II

PLANS & MAPS

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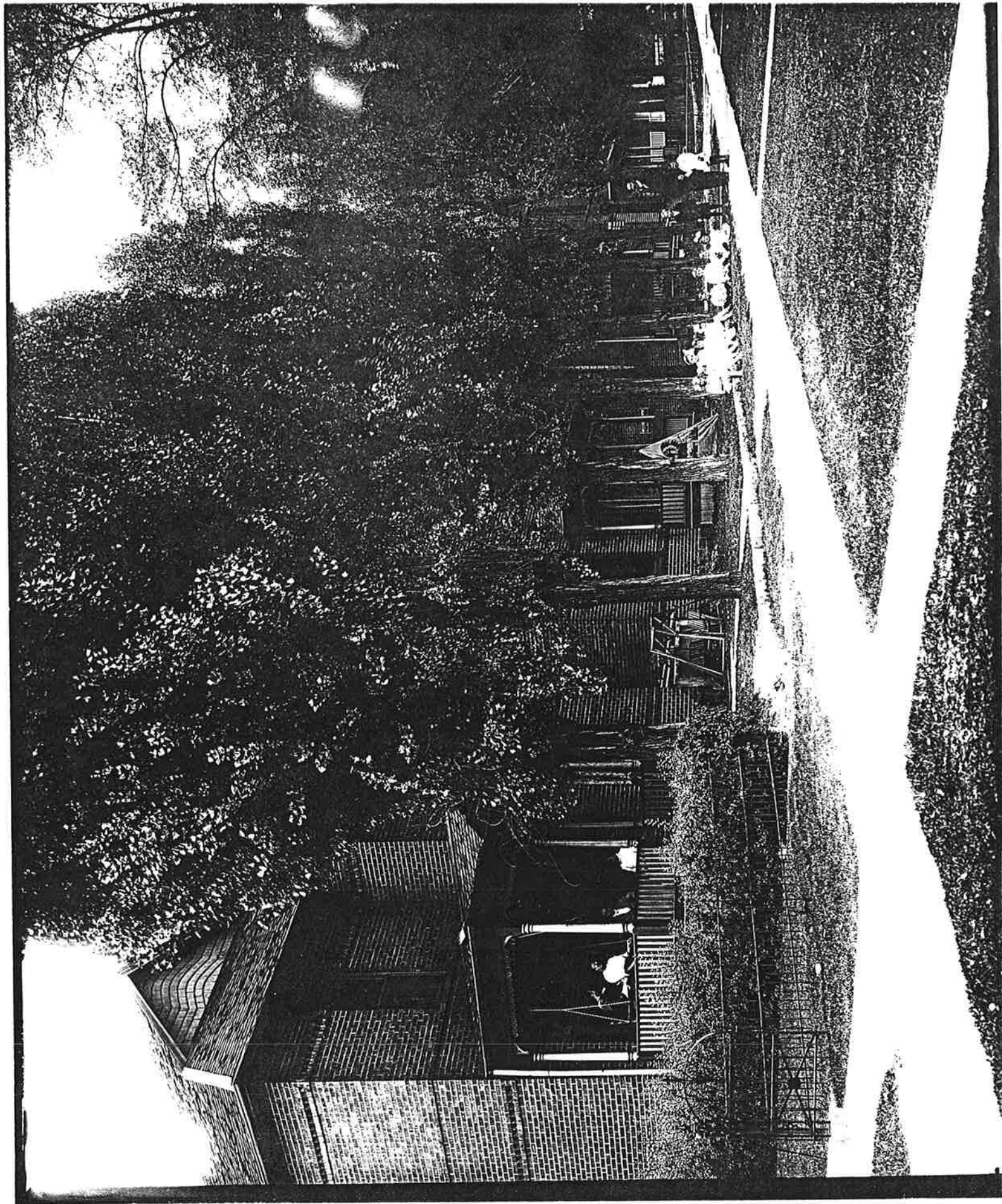
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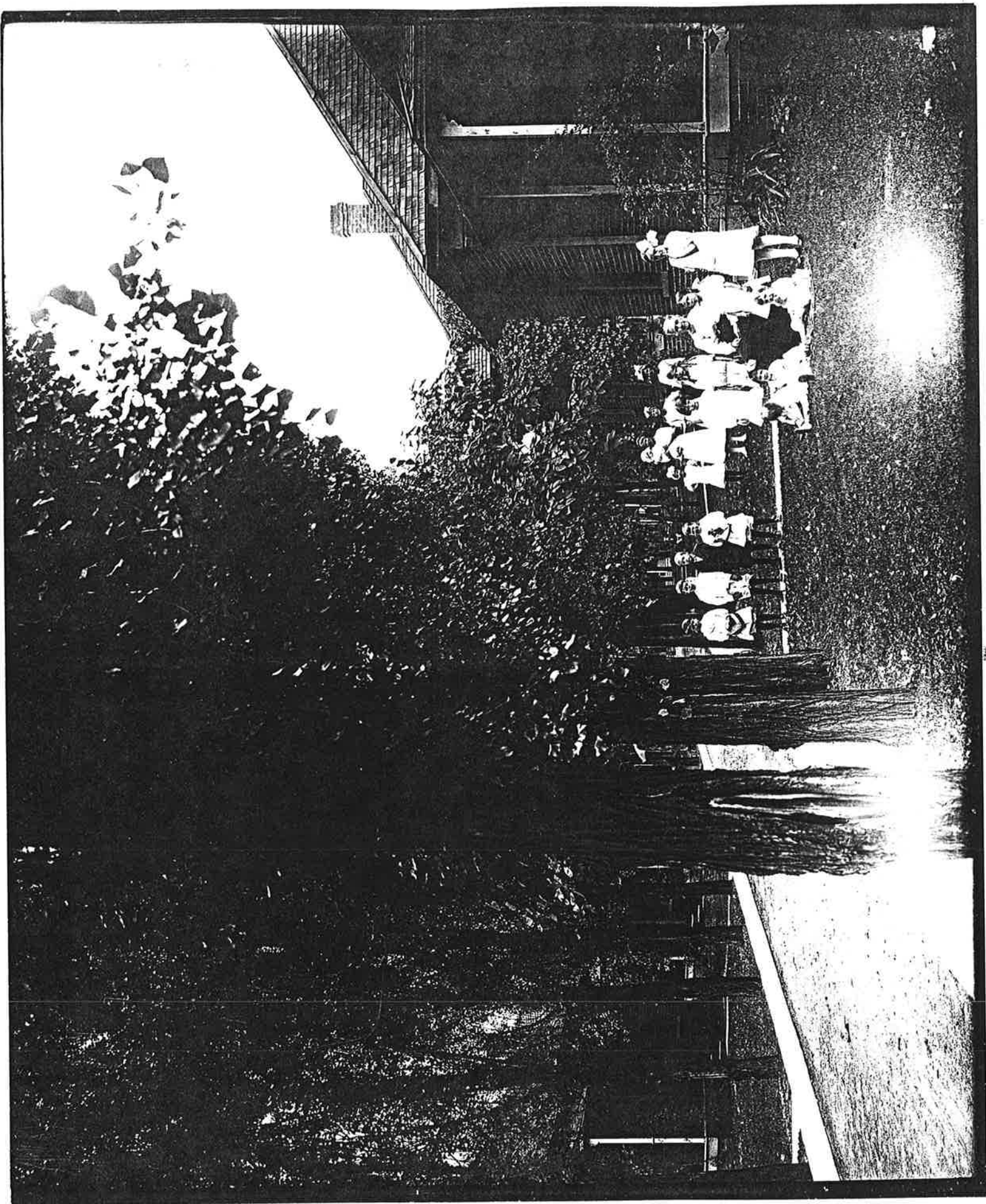
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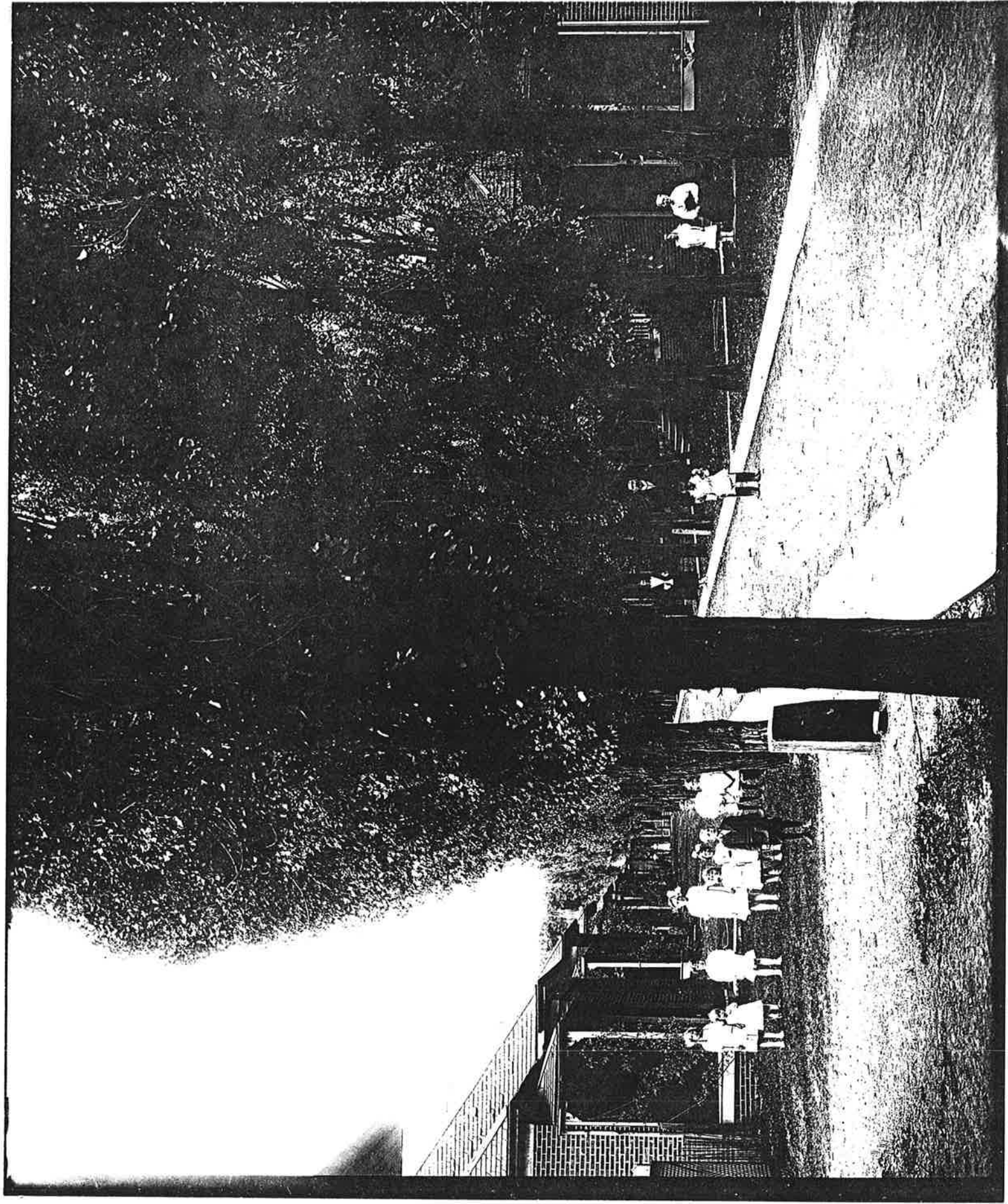
APPENDIX III

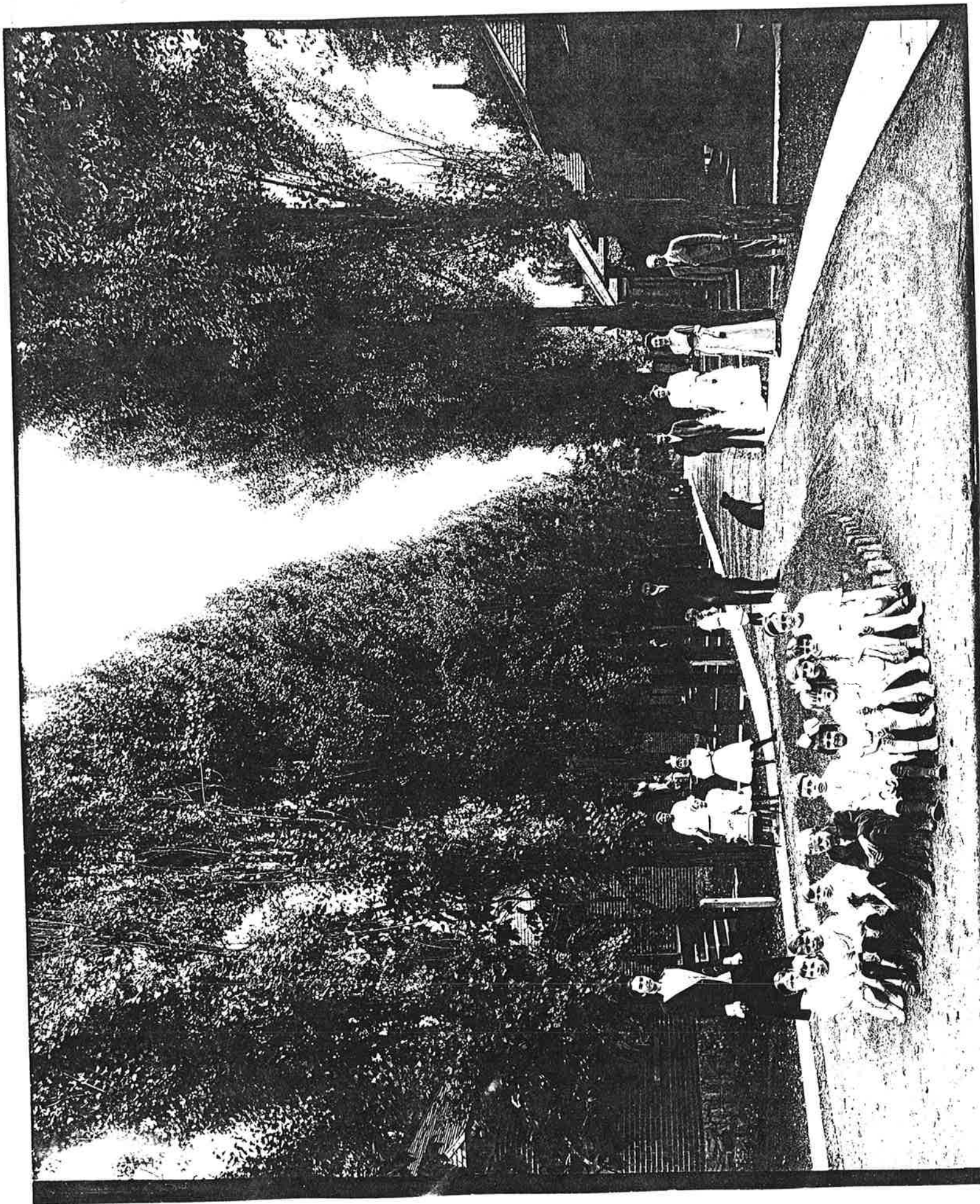
SHIPLER PHOTO COLLECTION

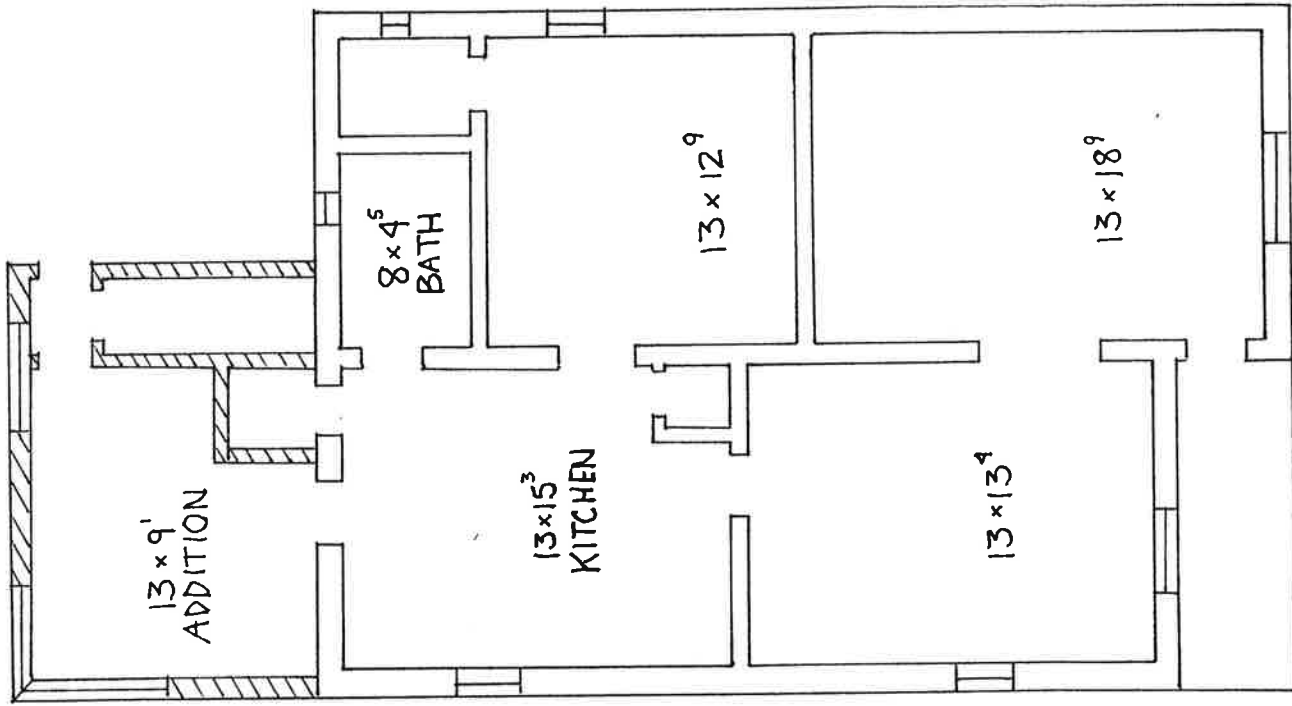
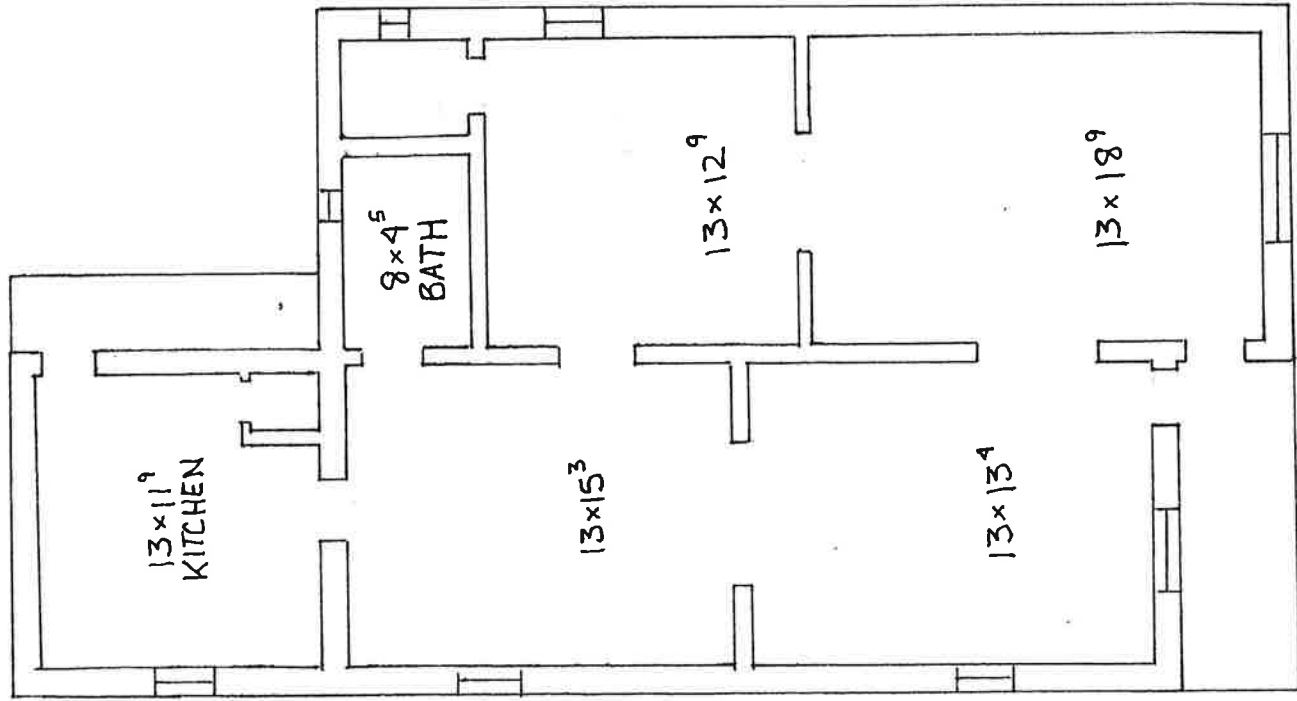
1912



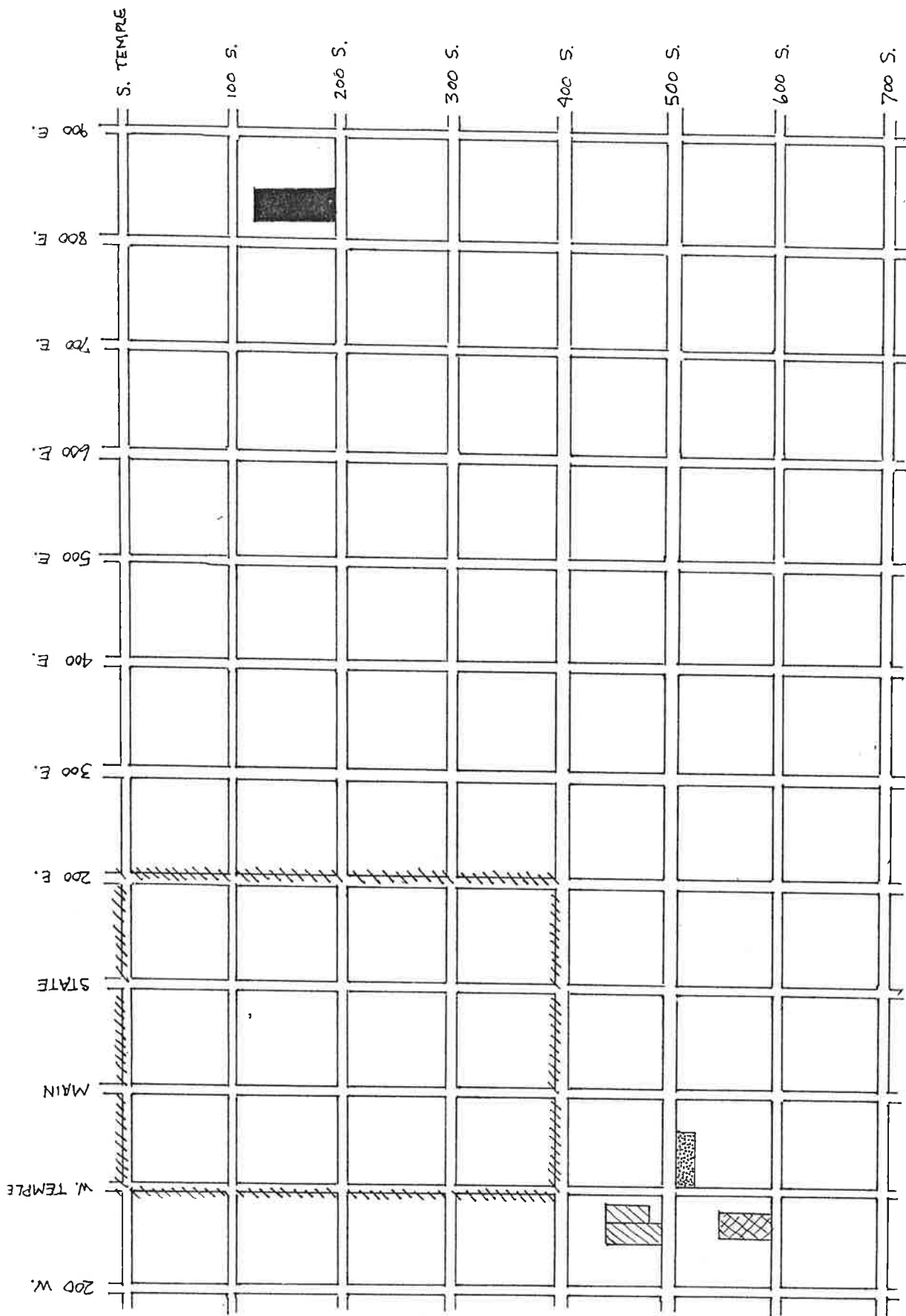






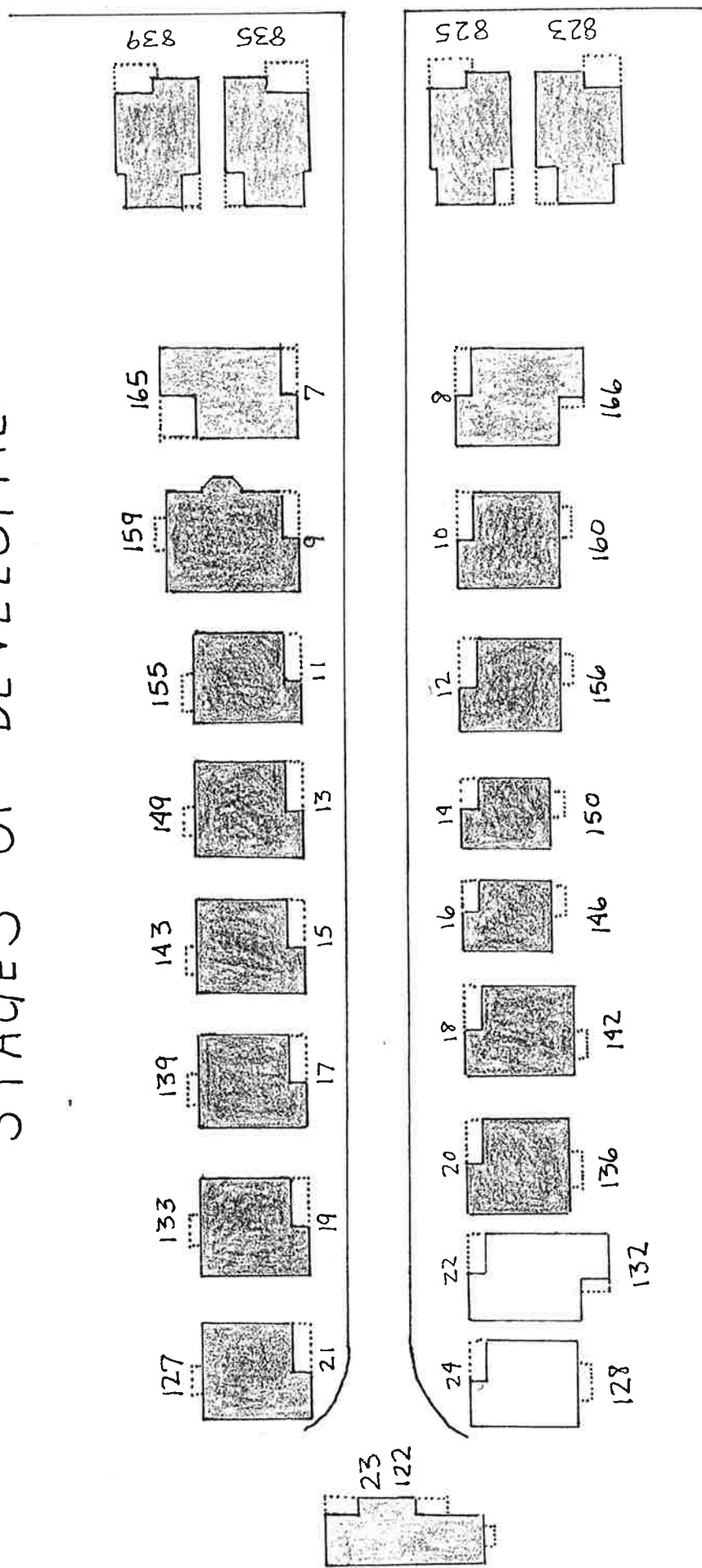


TYPICAL FLOORPLANS
WELLINGTON/DOOLEY COURT



WELLINGTON/DOOLEY COURT 1894
HARVEY'S COTTAGE ROW <1889
WILLARD COURT <1891
DEVON COURT/CLIFT PLACE C.1900
CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT



1894

1898

1904

RED - WELLINGTON COURT ADDRESS < 1917

BLUE - DOOLEY COURT ADDRESS > 1917